

I have served on the local school board and am currently on the City Council in Pacifica, a city of 38,000 in the San Francisco Bay Area. The residents in our community are very interested in local government and events and I believe this is due to the fact that we have a weekly newspaper and a local PEG station that broadcasts all public meetings. To understand and maintain trust in government it is critical that citizens be able to observe their elected officials as they deliberate and make decisions that affect the community; it is essential to maintaining an informed electorate, the heart of our democratic process. Our local PEG station (Pacifica Community Television) also provides an opportunity for all people to "make" television themselves, which once again enhances individuals' ability to speak out locally, communicate, and expand their own boundaries as well as others'. The difference between watching and participating is an important difference that builds self-reliance and responsibility at all levels of society. I believe our local cable provider would prefer to offer a token regional community information update as a substitute for our locally produced and operated media center. We need your support to prevent this from happening. Please consider making PEG support required nationally as it is in California State Policy. Please reopen and review legislation and stop the deregulation process. Citizens need to be able to participate locally in media. The federal policies need to support the citizens of our country in being media literate and media "able". Local stations (media centers) provide citizens of all ages with the skills, the access, and the opportunity to participate. We look to you to insure and strengthen their support.